Oldest alumnus
-An interview with a St. Michael's soon-to-be centenarian pg 2

Venezuelan crisis
Members of the community reflect on family living in Venezuela pg 14

College accused of being homophobic
Anonymous posters claim college rejected proposed pride crosswalk. pg 22

The Defender

The Voice of St. Michael's College

PHOTO BY MATT HELLER

Kristyn Achilich, Coordinator of the St. Michael's farm, instructs Caroline Bennett '19 as she places a sap bucket on a newly tapped maple tree on Friday, Feb. 22.

Tapping into tradition on campus

By Lee Krulikowski
Staff Writer

Dotted around campus, galvanized metal and blue plastic buckets hang at a slight tilt from maple trees. Some students have tucked trash into them, assuming they are cleverly placed receptacles. But the buckets are slowly collecting the sap of the warming trees. Every few days a group of students pop by to check on them and pour the bounty into a larger bin to later boil into maple syrup.

After several years of research and experimentation by faculty and staff, St. Michael's is finally joining the maple community.

The development is currently headed by Krystin Achilich, coordinator of the St. Michael's farm and professor of environmental studies. Several other faculty members and their classes have also been involved in the process. Karen Popovich, professor of business and accounting, has one of her business classes calculating and balancing the economics. Brian Collier's environmental art class is creating signs for the trees so that people know what's going on. Declan McCabe's biology class is measuring and analyzing the sap output of the trees on campus. The goal of this new agricultural crop at St. Michael's is to create an interdisciplinary community where everyone on campus can get involved in the act of turning the sap into syrup.

The process is "a ritual at a time when you're looking for a sense of renewal" said English professor Joan Wry. She's not directly involved in the process on campus, but she and her husband have been sugaring on their property for a few years, collecting the sap in buckets and evaporating it in their designated turkey fryer.

SEE MAPLE SUGAR pg 10

Oldest alum turns 100 this month

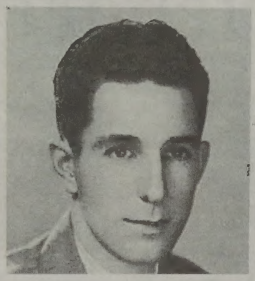
by **Matt Heller**
Photography Editor

Walking into the South Burlington apartment of Jules Pequignot '42, the first thing you see is a purple and gold number 42 St. Michael's jersey. It was presented to him by Angela Armour, Director of Alumni Relations, for the 75th anniversary of his graduation. While Pequignot hasn't been a St. Michael's student since World War II, his love for the school is still reflected in his life today.

Pequignot, 99, Saint Michael's oldest living alumnus, will turn 100 this month. He was born in Winsted, Conn. on March 27, 1919. Growing up, he enjoyed playing baseball and basketball, facing stars in High School such as Francis Joseph "Spec" Shea, who went on to be an all-star and World Series winning pitcher for the New York Yankees.

Pequignot was on track to attend a military school to play two years of baseball and basketball. But a recruiter from St. Michael's came to visit him, suggesting he attend the school. So, Pequignot, his parents, his sister and her husband made the long trek up route 7 to campus. There, Fr. Lyons offered him a ride if he were to attend.

When Pequignot arrived on campus, he moved into Old Hall for his first semester, where his roommate, from St. Albans, came early to get them the best furniture for the room. Early memories of his time as a Knight includes a class with Dr. Jeremiah Durick, for whom today's library is named. Pequignot remembered him as a "poetic" professor who always smelled like cough drops.



JULES PEQUIGNOT, PH.B.

Torrington, Conn. Sodality (1, 2, 3, 4); Mission Crusade (1, 2, 3, 4); Outing Club (1, 2); Connecticut Club (1, 2, 3, 4); Varsity Sports (1, 2, 3, 4); Basketball (1, 2, 3, 4), Captain (4), Baseball (1, 2, 3, 4); Cantata (1); Dance Committees (3, 4); Intramural Sports (1, 2, 3, 4).

PHOTO COURTESY OF THE ST. MICHAEL'S ARCHIVES

Pequignot's senior photo from a 1942 edition of "The Lance" lists many clubs and activities he was involved in during his time at St. Michaels.

Pequignot continued to play his two favorite childhood sports in college, but basketball was his favorite. A four-year starter on the basketball team and a captain his senior year, Pequignot was a three time All-State selection, won the state scoring title as a junior with 204 points, and broke the state free throw record as a senior with 30 free-throws.

"I made the baskets then pretty good. I was fast, I was very fast," Pequignot said. Fast enough to be dubbed "The Flying Frenchman".

On the diamond, Pequignot played third base and pitched. A two-time All-State selection and a captain senior year, he hit for a career .333 average and was 4-2 on the mound. He was part of the 1940 Green Mountain Conference Co-Champion season, one of the best teams in St. Michael's history.

Pequignot graduated in 1942 with a bachelor's degree in philosophy, a path he can't remember choosing.

"That's the class they put us in, the most of us, I think," he said.

Pequignot met his wife, Doris, through a mutual friend. Their first date included a trip to Henry's Diner, a venue still popular to St. Michael's students. More than seventy years later, he and Doris have four children, along with grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

After graduation, Pequignot spent a year as an assistant basketball coach at Mount St. Joseph's High School in Rutland, later moving to Cathedral High School in Burlington. He then took an abrupt chnage, interviewing to work as a Nationwide Insurance claims adjustor.

"They gave you big money, they gave you a brand-new car. Every time the car became 50,000 miles you got a new car. They paid for oil, gas, tires, anything," Pequignot said.

"He's a St. Michael's treasure."

-Chris Kenny, Athletic Director

He ended up working at Nationwide until his retirement.

Pequignot also became an avid golfer, shooting three hole-in-ones, two at the Burlington Country Club. He served as the president of the Vermont Basketball Association, on the St. Michael's Alumni Board, and was an active member of the Knights of Columbus.

Until recently, Pequignot regularly attended St. Michael's basketball games, sitting in the bleachers and talking with Athletic Director Chris Kenny '86. He would go to Kenny's office every Monday when Doris had her friends over to play bridge.

"He's a great guy. I just feel sorry for him because he's Athletic Director and they're losing basketball games," Pequignot remarked.

Kenny, who met Pequignot in 1988 at his Hall of Fame celebration, sees him as an ambassador for the college.

"He's a guy who exhibits a real joy for life...He's a St. Michael's treasure," said Kenny.

While he has trouble walking and has had recent hand injuries, Pequignot tries not to let his age slow him down.

"I never thought I'd live that long... Doris and I have lived a happy life," he said.

When asked what he still plans to do with life, his response was simple.

"Die! I only have probably four more years if I'm lucky," he said with a chuckle.

PHOTO BY JAMES KOPPELMANN

Jules Pequignot '42 and Angela Armour '99, Director of Alumni Relations, smile for a photo in Pequignot's apartment on Tuesday, Feb. 26. Pequignot will celebrate his 100th birthday on March 27.

Venezuela's crisis hits home: 'I saw people eating garbage'

By Nanako Iwasawa
Staff Writer

PHOTO ILLUSTRATION BY BRANDON BIELINSKI

Fr. Lino Oropeza who was born in Venezuela, worries about his family members who still live in the country.

Before he left Venezuela for St. Michael's College in August, Angel Angelini, 17, and his parents and sister, like many people in Venezuela, began eating less, and unintentionally losing weight. In Maracay where he grew up, he saw many people suffering from the food shortage that has gripped the country as a political crisis continues.

In the supermarket, there was no bread, milk, or cheese. He ate cereal and anything his family could find in the day. Meat and chicken were only affordable for people who are relatively wealthy. "I consider myself lucky because I managed to eat at least two meals a day," Angelini said.

In the street, there were people eating garbage, and asking for money.

More and more people like Angelini are fleeing Venezuela. The country is suffering from a political standoff, and the resulting economic crisis caused by hyperinflation. The result has been a severe shortage of food, medicine, and other basic needs such as electricity.

The 2018 election that the current president Nicolás Maduro won for another six-year term has been controversial and is largely seen as unfair since opposition parties boycotted it with the fear of being punished by Maduro. On Jan. 3, Juan Guaidó, the president of the legislature, declared himself the new leader of the country following the constitution which determines that the head of the National Assembly can take over the position of the presidency in case the current president cannot be regarded as legitimate.

Rev. Lino Oropeza, S.S.E, who was born in Venezuela has not returned to his country for five years, said his mother and sister still live in Venezuela but other relatives left the country and are now living around the world in Canada, Spain, Dubai, Australia, and Colombia.

His family in Venezuela has experienced hard times finding food along with many Venezuelans. Since there is no food in supermarkets, there are people whose job is to get food and sell it to people at three or four times the normal price. They never know when their next meal will be.

Even people who have the money may not be able to locate food to purchase. "People live in tension and anxiety between food and money, and it is stressful," he said.

Because the government's censorship is getting worse, Oropeza is also scared that they might cut communication tools which are vital for him to contact his family and know their situation.

> **"I consider myself lucky because I managed to eat at least two meals a day."**
>
> -Angel Angelini

Like many members of Oropeza's family, Angelini's family has left Venezuela. His sister is now living in Argentina, and his parents are living in Spain. Since going to a college in Venezuela was not the best choice for his future, he chose to study this year at St. Michael's. Many of his friends are living outside the country too. "Colombia, Spain, pretty much all over the world." He is concerned about two of his friends who are still living in Maracay, his hometown, a one-hour drive from the capital Caracas, and who are joining the protest against the current government.

How can this situation be improved? Angelini thinks it is necessary to get rid of Maduro, and all the socialist systems he and Hugo Chávez, the former president, created.

Rev. Marcel Rainville, S.S.E, who worked and lived in Venezuela from 1967 to 1988, also has opinions about the political crisis that is harming Venezuelans. Since Maduro strengthened a confrontational stance against opposition parties and people, regime change only seems possible under significant support from the military, Rainville said. However, the fact that Maduro has rewarded military members who are loyal to him makes this less likely. "They must change ideology. They need to see the needs of their people instead of their personal economic needs."

As the situation worsens, people must resort to stealing Angelini said. "When you walk in the street, people try to steal things from you." For many Venezuelans, the only way to feed their family is to steal.

Is there anything the campus community can do? Angelini said simply donating one dollar makes a difference. "One dollar is a lot of money, though Americans may not think what they can do with 1 dollar is much." He also hopes the campus community and other Americans will see Venezuelans who left and moved to other countries like him with more empathy.

"People in other countries sometimes think 'what are you doing here? Go back to your country'. We aren't there because we want to harm you. We are there because it is hard to live in Venezuela."

Former president works at full salary

By Meg Friel
News Editor

You may have seen him around campus, grabbing a quick bite from Alliot with an Edmundite or sipping on coffee at 'Steins with a student. Although retired, former president John Neuhauser is spending this academic year at St. Michael's College, still doing some work for the school.

Although he is technically retired, Neuhauser is on sabbatical for this academic year and still receives full pay. Neuhauser's income in 2017 was more than $475,000. When Neuhauser came to St. Michael's in 2007, he received compensation from both Boston College, where he had been Academic Vice President and St. Michael's, his income totalling over $1 million dollars, according to a 2009 article in The Chronicle of Higher Education.

> "I would like to spend more time with students, in terms of helping them with graduate school or employment."
>
> -John Neuhauser, former president

In a recent interview Neuhauser said he often works in assisting President Lorraine Sterritt, going to events she's unable to attend, and talking to potential donors. For example, next month Neuhauser will be spending a few days in Florida, visiting alums in hopes of their donation to the college.

"I do pretty much whatever Dr. Sterrit would like me to do, so if there's an event she cannot make, would expect that's fairly typical of anybody who retires from the college, and not particularly unique to me or my position. Obviously, my connection to prospective donors and alumni is important to the college, and I will continue to do that for as long as I'm able to do so."

Neuhauser said he enjoys his continuous work for the college, and his opportunity to stay in touch with and assist faculty, Edmundites, and students alike. He usually spends a couple of days a week on campus, meeting with students, and assisting them with senior semester projects or post-graduation matters.

"I would like to spend more time with students, in terms of helping them with graduate school or employment. It would be easier if I had an office to do that," Neuhauser said. "I tend to go to Einstein's because that seems to be an easy place to talk. I'm still actively involved with some students I was close to. Of course they'll be graduating soon, so I imagine that will change a bit."

Neuhauser explained that a sabbatical year is typical of any retired president, and that even when his sabbatical ends, he still hopes to continue helping students and staff of the college.

"I'll do anything I can for the college for as long as I'm mobile," Neuhauser said. "I hope that's a long time."

PHOTO COURTESY OF ST. MICHAEL'S COLLEGE WEBSITE
Former president John J. Neuhauser, pictured above, continues to work for the college in his retirement at full pay for another year

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Barbecue

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PIZZA TOPPINGS
Italian Pepperoni
Hot Italian Sausage
Fresh Ground Western Beef
Cob Smoked Bacon
Marinated Chicken Breast
New England Baked Ham
Anchovy Fillets
Sliced Plum Tomatoes
Freshly Cut Broccoli
Sliced White Mushrooms
Fresh Green Spinach
Sliced Red Onions
Shredded Potatoes
Sliced Green Peppers
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Marinated Sun Dried Tomatoes
Sliced Jalapeno Peppers
Pepperdew® Peppers
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Black Olives
Sweet Pineapple
Dried Cranberries
Marinated Artichoke Hearts
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Greek Feta Cheese
Grated Parmesan Cheese
Flavorful Four Cheese Blend
Smoked Gouda Cheese
Vegan Cheese
Crumbled Goat Cheese

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PANKO CRUSTED BONELESS TENDERS
REGULAR / BBQ / BUFFALO / THAI

TRADITIONAL
AMANDA'S SIX FEET UNDER
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CLASSIC PEPPERONI DELUXE
Tomato Sauce, Cheddar/Mozzarella Cheese, Italian Pepperoni, New England Baked Ham, Sliced Red Onions, Green Peppers and White Mushrooms
HAWAIIAN ISLAND DELIGHT
Tomato Sauce, Cheddar/Mozzarella Cheese, New England Baked Ham, Cob Smoked Bacon, Freshly Cut Broccoli and Sweet Pineapple
MEAT LOVER'S REVENGE
Tomato Sauce, Cheddar/Mozzarella Cheese, Italian Pepperoni, Hot Italian Sausage, Ground Western Beef and New England Baked Ham
NICOLE'S BACON CHEESEBURGER PARADISE
Honey Barbecue Sauce, Cheddar/Mozzarella Cheese, Sliced Red Onions, Extra Ground Beef, Cob Smoked Bacon, Sprinkles of Gorgonzola Cheese
ROASTED CHICKEN BBQ
Barbecue Sauce, Cheddar/Mozzarella Cheese, Marinated Chicken Breast, Sliced Red Onions, White Mushrooms, Roasted Red Peppers with Mesquite Spices
TEXAS HOT BUFFALO CHICKEN
Zesty Tomato Pesto Hot Sauce, Cheddar/Mozzarella Cheese, Spicy Chicken Breast, Sliced Red Onions with Gorgonzola Cheese
LEONARDO'S WORKS
Tomato Sauce, Cheddar/Mozzarella Cheese, Italian Pepperoni, New England Baked Ham, Hot Italian Sausage, Freshly Cut Broccoli, White Mushrooms, Red Onions, Green Peppers and Black Olives

INSPIRED VEGETARIAN
EXOTIC GREEK ISLAND
Tomato Sauce, Cheddar/Mozzarella Cheese, Chopped Garlic, Sliced Red Onions, Fresh Spinach, Plum Tomatoes and Black Olives with Greek Feta Cheese
GOAT CHEESE HONEY PIE
Olive Oil Garlic Sauce, Cheddar/Mozzarella Cheese, Freshly Sliced Mushrooms, Freshly Sliced Red Onions, Thyme, Crumbled Goat Cheese with Drizzled Honey
GORGONZOLA GOURMET
Olive Oil Garlic Sauce, Cheddar/Mozzarella Cheese, Fresh Spinach, Plum Tomatoes, Marinated Artichoke Hearts with Gorgonzola Cheese
SMOKIN' GOUDA
Tomato Sauce, Cheddar/Mozzarella Cheese, Chopped Garlic, Fresh Basil, Sliced Red Onions, Pepperdew® Peppers with Smoked Gouda Cheese
VEGETARIAN WORKS
Tomato Sauce, Cheddar/Mozzarella Cheese, Fresh Spinach, Broccoli, White Mushrooms, Green Peppers, Red Onions, Plum Tomatoes and Black Olives
WHERE'S WALDORF?
Olive Oil Garlic Sauce, Four Cheese Blend, Sliced Brussels Sprouts, Dried Cranberries and Chopped Pecans
VEGAN SALVATION
Olive Oil Garlic Sauce, Vegan Cheese, Fresh Spinach, Sliced Red Onions, White Mushrooms, Plum Tomatoes, Black Olives

SIGNATURE GOURMET
BASIL PESTO CHICKEN
Basil Pesto Nut Sauce, Cheddar/Mozzarella Cheese, Marinated Chicken Breast, Roasted Red Peppers, Sun Dried Tomatoes, Sliced Red Onions with Gorgonzola Cheese
FENNEL SAUSAGE GOURMET
Olive Oil Garlic Sauce, Cheddar/Mozzarella Cheese, Hot Italian Sausage, Fennel, Sliced Red Onions, Fresh Spinach with Gorgonzola Cheese
LA MEETS BRUSSELS
Honey Barbecue Sauce, Cheddar/Mozzarella Cheese, Sliced Brussels Sprouts, Sliced Red Onions, Cob Smoked Bacon, Sprinkles of Gorgonzola Cheese
ROASTED MAINE POTATO
Olive Oil Garlic Sauce, Cheddar/Mozzarella Cheese, Fresh Spinach, Sliced Red Onions, Shredded Potatoes, Smoked Bacon, Rosemary and Feta Cheese
THAI CHICKEN
Thai Peanut Sauce, Cheddar/Mozzarella Cheese, Marinated Chicken Breast, Sliced White Mushrooms, Red Onions, Green Bell Peppers and Freshly Cut Broccoli

SIDES, SALADS, DESSERTS & DRINKS
FRESH BREADSTICKS
Cheesy $5.75
Cheesy Garlic $6.00
FRESH SALADS
Garden $5.00
Caesar $6.00
Spinach Pecan $6.05
CINNAMON BUBBLE BREAD
Sea Salt Caramel $5.50
Dark Chocolate Truffle $5.50
DRINKS
10.9 oz Honest Organic Ice Teas / Aides Pomegranate Blue Cranberry Lemonade Honey Green Tea / Half & Half $2.35
20 oz Coca Cola / Diet Coke / Sprite Dasani $2.05
2 LITER Coca Cola / Diet Coke / Sprite $3.15

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Dwindling demographics threaten northeast colleges:

Saint Michael's has done a lot but could it do more?

By Brandon Bielinski
Executive Editor

As the number of highschool graduates in the United States plateaus over the next decade and then drops off precipitously in 2027, St. Michael's, like many small private schools in the northeast, is making plans on how to adjust.

"The northeast is experiencing what I think a lot of the country is going to be tasting in the mid 2020's," said Nathan Grawe, professor of economics at Carleton College and author of *Demographics and The Demand for Higher Education*. "I hope that institutions having an 18 year head start on what's coming will make changes so that they are able to handle the change that comes," Grawe said.

Many small, private schools that are largely tuition dependent are at risk because the majority of the students they enroll come from the northeast where the number of high school graduates is dwindling. St. Michael's, which draws largely from Massachusetts, is no exception.

"Declining demographics have been on our radar for five to seven years," said Vice President of Finance, Rob Robinson, noting that the school has strategically aimed to embrace the dwindling amount of high school students.

Five years ago board trustee chair Michael McGrath, told a reporter for Inside Higher Ed, "It's really dumb if you don't prepare for a storm."

The demographics projection has allowed St. Michael's and many other institutions to prepare for enrollment decline. "We know what the birth rates are, you know and we have an 18 year lead time on that," said Director of Admissions Michael Stefanowicz.

"We have tried to address the declining enrollment while minimizing the impact on the student experience. We haven't' cut any major programs, we haven't cut any major offerings," Robinson said.

> **"We have tried to address the declining enrollment while minimizing the impact on the student experience."**
>
> -Rob Robinson, Vice President of Finance

Robinson noted that with fewer students the college can't operate the same way it did in the past. "There are fewer employees today than their were a few years ago," said Robinson.

Maintaining a cohort of 510 students remains the goal of the college. "It takes hard work, but we are leaving no stone unturned," said President Lorraine Sterritt.

"At 510 new students every fall I think St. Michael's can maintain our existing structure in general and offer all of the things that we self identify as creating a St. Michael's experience. If we have sustained new enrollment at less than 510 than we need to continue to look at how to reduce expenses," Robinson said.

Robinson acknowledged that while cutting expenses has proven beneficial for the college, it is not sustainable. "Since 2015 our total net student revenue has declined nine million dollars. We simply can't cut expenses fast enough to keep a pace with that decline in revenue," Robinson said.

The admissions office has increased recruiting efforts by employing a larger staff. "From the time that I started as the director of admission we've been able to add three territory manager admission counselor positions," Stefanowicz said.

Both are positioned in strategic areas of recruitment for the college - Washington D.C. and Worcester, Mass.

"We can't put all of our eggs in the Massachusetts basket, and we don't," said Stefanowicz. Despite the state's projected loss of 5,000 students by 2030, the college continues to draw an estimated two-thirds to three-quarters of its students from Massachusetts.

Each of the 14 admissions staff members are assigned a geographic area to recruit from. "This is really where you want to diversify where students are coming from," said Stefanowicz.

The college has been very successful at enrolling students who visit campus. "If we can get somebody to come visit campus as an admitted student we have a better than 50% shot of them enrolling at St. Mike's, Stefanowicz said.

In addition to recruiting new students, ensuring they stay has also been a major focus for the college. Efforts include a retention committee and even a student of concern portal button faculty and staff can activate if they feel a student is likely to leave the college.

"St. Mike's has always had a really relatively high retention compared to our peer schools," said Assistant Dean and Registrar David Barrowclough, noting the 86-87 percent retention rate is roughly 10 percent higher than the national average.

Higher Education consultants argue that many schools need to do more. "What worked in the past is no longer going to work in the future because worldwide and in the United States things have changed so much," said Marguerite Dennis, executive director

SEE ENROLLMENT pg 5

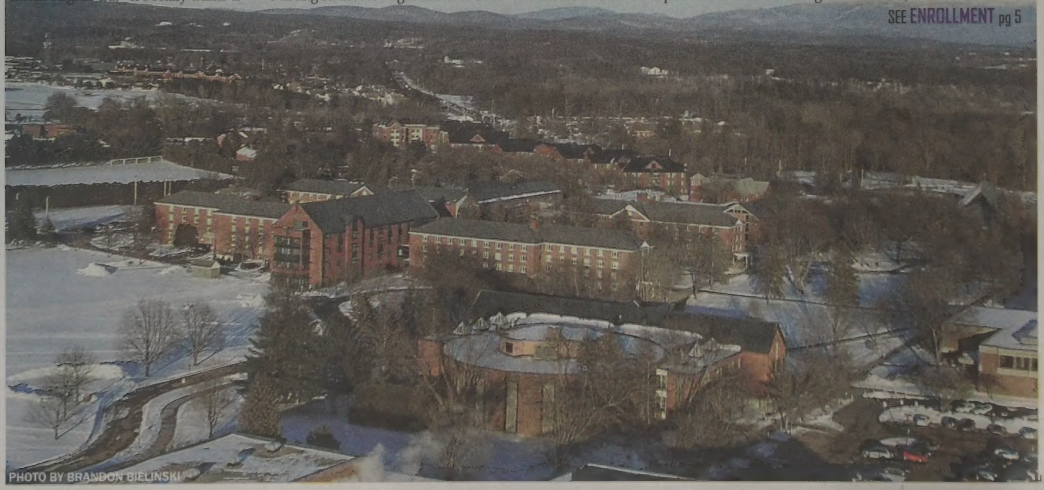


PHOTO BY BRANDON BIELINSKI

21st century sex ed comes to campus

By Caitlin Holmquist
Environmental Editor

Can we all just take a moment to think back to our high school sex ed class where we all sat flushed with embarrassment as we stared at anatomically accurate drawings of our reproductive systems. Okay, sorry for bringing up a time in your life you've worked hard to push into the abyss of your mind, but it is this stigma that Dorian Solot and her romantic partner Marshall Miller are trying fix with their program "Sex Discussed Here!"

Last week Common Ground hosted Solot and Miller on campus to give one of their smart, funny sex ed talks that they have been putting on at schools all over the country for the past 15 years. As I trekked across campus I thought, "What college kid wants to subject themselves to yet another boring scientific rundown of how sex works and the dangers that come with the territory?" But boy was this assumption quickly shattered when to my surprise I walked into a bubbling, decently crowded room of about 30 students with all genders equally represented. The duo's "songs to have sex to" playlist reverberated off the walls as attendees milled about taking a look at the free pins and stickers that were up for grabs.

I was actually laughing and enjoying the conversation along with the rest of the audience despite the fact that Solot was waving a female condom around as they explained the various forms of protection that included everything from your standard condom to makeshift saran wrap dental dams.

During the hour long information portion of their presentation they shared tips on "how to be a great partner in bed" and Solot claimed that great partners educate themselves on all topics from the uses of lube, the multitude of ways to prevent STIs, and most importantly the three magic words,"Is this okay?"

A safe sexual relationship needs these quick check ins as you progress through a night (or day, whatever floats your boat) of intimacy they said. Miller demonstrated this for us as he walked up to Solot and as he reached to undo her pants, he softly asked "Is this okay?" Laughter broke out around the small room and everyone seemed to relax a little more in their seats upon realizing how easy those seemingly loaded words were able to be slipped out in the heat of the moment.

With about 30 minutes left in their presentation they handed out note cards and invited us to write down any questions we had. Everyone scribbled away and carefully folded their notecards before placing them into a sunshine yellow box. I was surprised by the intimacy that people poured onto these little 3x5 notecards as questions arose about how to handle a partner that may be cheating or how to ask if your girlfriend wants to have anal sex. People shared their personal insecurities about never having had an orgasm and another expressed their fear about telling their partner they are a virgin. The mood was a more somber during this time as the audience listened to the insights Solot and Miller had.

No one appeared uncomfortable throughout the talk and I was amazed by the confidence and ease with which many audience members voiced their thoughts on everything from where the best sex shop is to tips on how to feel comfortable hooking up with someone for the first time.

ILLUSTRATION BY MAIRIN KING AND CAITLIN HOLMQUIST

DWINDLING, CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

of higher education consultancy firm MJ Dennis Consultants.

Dennis stressed that colleges need to look at other demographics of potential candidates. "The pie hasn't gotten smaller. The old pie has gotten smaller. The pie is actually bigger, but people aren't looking at the big pie, they're looking at what was," said Dennis, referring to the traditional white male and female 18-year-old highschool graduate as the old pie.

"There are so many different ways to do this, but if you look with the same old eyes at the big problem, you're never going to solve it in my opinion," Dennis said.

Robinson stressed that current students can be very influential in recruiting new candidates. "I guess I want to the students to understand that this isn't something they are detached from this is something they can be actively involved in," Robinson said.

"St. Mike's depends a lot on our tradition and what we stand for, but as president Sterritt has said many times, we are a little too humble about that. We need to be out there telling people more vocally. The time to be quiet is definitely not now," said Barrowclough.

PHOTO BY BRANDON BIELINSKI

A drone shot above Saint Michael's, where the college has made changes to adapt to the decreasing high school graduate demographics. Experts argue schools can do more.

Abortion watchdogs consider new legislation

The Defender speaks to three vocal lobbyists

By Meg Friel
News Editor

With Brett Kavanaugh now serving as a Supreme Court Justice, tipping the court toward more conservative decisions, reconsidering Roe v. Wade appears more possible, meaning decisions around abortion could once again be determined state by state. In February, the Vermont House passed a bill that preserves abortion rights, once again igniting a flurry of opinions from both pro-choice and pro-life activists.

The Vermont House, facing multiple amendments to restrict abortion access, recently passed additional legislation, titled H.57, to secure a woman's right to choose abortion. The Defender spoke with three individuals who watch the abortion debate closely for their take on the current landscape.

"If Roe were overturned, the most likely scenario would be that the power to regulate the right to an abortion would be returned to each individual state," said Susan Apel, a professor at the Vermont Law School who works in family law and gender issues, including abortion. "For a 'liberal' state like Vermont, a change in abortion law seems unlikely but one never knows."

Vermont decriminalized abortion in the 1972 court case of Beecham v. Leahy. Since then, there have been no restrictions or regulations on the practice of abortions. The recent House legislation confirmed that ruling, said Apel.

Opponents criticize the House legislation as lacking concern for young women or unborn children. Centers where abortions are offered, such as Planned Parenthood, are still threatened by the possibility of Roe v. Wade being overturned. Planned Parenthood communications director for Vermont Eileen Sullivan explains how.

"We need all hands on deck to protect our rights to abortion access," said Sullivan in a phone interview. "The rights and access to abortion we've spent decades fighting for could disappear. We're watching Supreme Court cases very closely."

Mary Hahn Beerworth from the Vermont Right to Life Committee, which supported multiple amendments that would restrict abortions for minors, late term pregnancies and protect the "voice of the unborn," said she she believes that the abortion laws in the state of Vermont won't be overturned any time soon, despite her and her supporters numerous efforts to stop legislation on pro-choice abortion laws.

"The legislation is entirely in favor of abortion. There's probably a handful of pro-lifers there," said Beerworth. "Please thank those who fought long and hard against H.57, in an attempt to represent not just pro-life Vermonters, but also pro-choice Vermonters who hope to strike a balance between the rights of the mother and the rights of a developing human being," Beerworth stated on her website.

Sullivan, however, said she worries not for the future of Vermont alone, but for the future of abortion laws nationally, and what that would mean for young women.

"Abortion rights for women is about having the right to self-determination," Sullivan said. "Abortion has been legal in this country for more than 45 years. Most people today have only known a country where they have the right to access abortion. That is my hope for the future, and future generations of women – to continue to have the right to self-determination."

ILLUSTRATION BY MEG FRIEL

Did you hear?

48 hour survival challenge: *kids are attempting to run away from home for 48 hours in hopes of "going viral" . As a result, their parents are frantically posting on the web asking for help to find their missing child. (MSN)*

Michael Cohen takes the stand: *puts Trump in the hot seat with his accusations that the President is "a racist, a liar and a habitual business cheat." (NYT)*

Nike's new ad "Dream Crazier" *was released at the Oscars, aiming to empower women. It has been viewed over seven million times on Youtube since being uploaded last week.*

Nike shoe crisis: *Duke basketball player Zion Williamson gets injured as a result of one of his Nike sneakers blowing out during a game against North Carolina on February 20. Nike's stock dropped more than 1.37 percent (about 3 billion dollars) the following day.(usatoday)*

Tornado rips through Alabama: *on Sunday, the Southeast experienced a catastrophe as 170 mph winds tore apart homes and businesses leaving at least 23 dead. (NYT)*

HBO's new documentary "Leaving Neverland" *on Sunday, HBO premiered its newest show, putting Michael Jackson's legacy under fire yet again as it details more allegations of childhood sexual abuse. (NYT)*

Momo: *a supposed urban legend has been scaring children and parents alike. She's taken over Youtube by popping up in the middle of popular kids shows like Peppa Pig and instructing them to commit various levels of self-harm, nd even in suicide. (RollingStone)*

NCAA: *St. Michael's is sending a record five skiers to compete at NCAA's in Stowe, taking place March 6-8.*

RAPE AGGRESSION DEFENSE
BASIC FOR WOMEN
Spring Session 2019
March 25, 26, April 1, 2
Mondays and Tuesdays
6:00-9:00PM
Pomerleau Alumni Center
R.A.D.
RAPE AGGRESSION DEFENSE SYSTEMS
– FEMALES ONLY 18 AND OLDER
– WEAR GYM STYLE CLOTHES
– 12 HOUR CLASS BROKEN INTO 4 NIGHTS
– PARENTAL CONSENT NEEDED FOR STUDENTS UNDER 18
– LECTURE, DISCUSSION, AND PHYSICAL TECHNIQUES
– FACULTY AND STAFF WELCOME
– FREE FOR ANYONE TO ATTEND
ANY QUESTIONS OR TO REGISTER CONTACT OUR INSTRUCTORS
SAINT MICHAEL'S COLLEGE
KNIGHT SAFE

SPONSORED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC SAFETY

ILLUSTRATION BY BRANDON BIELINSKI

How to get more money:

Navigating the ins and outs of the financial aid office

By Asah Whalen
Staff Writer

When Owen Sandburn '20 got the email from the Office of Student Financial Services in July asking whether or not he accepted certain aspects of his financial aid package, he immediately sent a letter to the office asking for additional help.

For Sandburn, like many students, the hardest part of college is figuring out how to pay for it. At St. Michael's College more than 90 percent of the student body receive financial aid. As colleges and universities continue to raise tuition, families are seeking ways to lessen the financial burden. Most start by filling out the FAFSA (Free Application for Federal Student Aid). But for many families, that isn't enough.

Like Sandburn, they might add other approaches, including writing a letter to the Office of Financial Aid elaborating on their circumstances and why additional money would be helpful.

"Providing additional context to the FAFSA is important in making sure that students are able to maximize the amount of aid they can get from the school, said Director of the Office of Financial Aid Matthew Desorgher. "What we see in the FAFSA [are] your household income and maybe savings, things of that nature, but we know that every one of those has a story around it which can help us tailor what services we can provide to students and families."

"If you send a letter to them they might give you more money so you don't have to pay that cost increase."

-Owen Sandburn, '20

In the experience of Sandburn every time he has written a letter, it has been answered with an increase in his aid package.

"They always increase the cost of the school without increasing the aid, that's where they get ya," Sandburn said.

"Year after year if you send a letter to them they might give you more money so you don't have to pay that cost increase." He suggests touting your GPA and describing how great of a student and community member you are.

Desorgher pointed out that they are working with a tight amount of resources and they cannot meet every request. "We're not holding anything back. We're putting the money that we have available out to students by way of awards."

Flyer calls out 'homophobic administration'

By Katherine Martin
Executive Editor

Last Saturday, anonymous flyers were hung up around campus calling out a "homophobic administration" for a lack of progress made on a proposed LGBTQ+ crosswalk. The proposal was drawn up last April by Melanie Castillo '18 and given to Lou DiMasi who sent it to then president, Jack Neuhauser. Supplies were bought after the project got the go ahead.

The rainbow crosswalk was originally planned to be at the main entrance near the Center for Women and Gender. It would represent LGBTQ+ rights and inclusion on this campus.

"It was April. April is crazy, right? He did not say no to it but then it just never happened," said Dawn Ellinwood, vice president for student affairs.

When the project failed to take place, Katie O'Donoghue '19 spearheaded re-introducing the idea to President Sterritt in the fall of 2018.

"Which is great but, who takes it down?" Ellinwood said of the crosswalk, or other permanent installations regarding expression. "Or, how long does it stay up? We don't have a policy. That's what we're working on."

President Sterritt, recognizing a need for a proper procedure, organized a committee regarding free speech and expression. The crosswalk, an expression of LGBTQ+ rights would fall into this category. This group made up of faculty and students including O'Donoghue, met four times in the fall and created a policy that was sent to the college attorney and vetted in February. They are now working on a procedure through which all requests of free speech and expression will go.

"I can understand why there is frustration from the community," said O'Donoghue. "We have asked for quite a bit of patience throughout this process, but within our community and beyond, marginalized groups are tired of being told to be patient. My primary concern is that the flyers may hinder our progress going forward, but I certainly empathize with the frustration."

According to the flyer, the administration offered a flagpole as an alternative to the crosswalk. "Don't be fooled," the flyer reads. "A homophobic administration will not allow an LGBT flag if it will not allow a rainbow crosswalk."

"We talked about a flagpole outside of Alliot where people could sign up for a three month period and there would be an educational piece to it," Ellinwood said. "For me, a flag can be a number of different things. A crosswalk is permanent.

"Not everybody is on the same page on this campus. There's lots to consider. We are a Catholic institution. Does that mean we aren't welcoming? No. It's hard. Hate speech is actually free speech too. So, if someone comes forward and wants to fly a black lives matter sign it's going to go through the process. If someone comes and wants to fly a MAGA sign, why? We will go through this process. We have to think broadly. I'm hoping it works."

As of now, no date is in place to install the crosswalk and no advancements seem to be possible until the procedure of the committee is set in stone.

"Do I see it completed by the end of the spring? I can't answer that. You know, my dream would be in the next few weeks we have a policy and procedure and it would be the first one to go through. It's a really well done proposal so let's put it through and see and if it doesn't go there where does it go? And how do we do this?"

Celebrate international women's day

HER STORY MADE HISTORY
FELICITY JONES
Ruth Bader Ginsburg
ON THE BASIS of SEX
ARMIE HAMMER
JUSTIN THEROUX
with SAM WATERSTON
and KATHY BATES
"I ask no favor for my sex, all I ask of our brethren is that they take their feet off our necks."
FILM SCREENING
Wednesday, March 13th
7:00pm
McCarthy Recital Hall

Other Events

UNA-USA Women and Peace Keeping Film Screen
Thurs., March 7 at 7 p.m. in Cheray 101

Woman Enough Gallery Reception D. McPhee
Fri., March 8 5:30 P.M. - 7:30 p.m. in McCarthy

Women's History Trivia Night
Fri., March 8 at 7 p.m. in the Library

Maple sugaring makes its way to campus

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 4

So far, 18 trees have been tapped, eight by the farm and 10 on main campus. The goal for the future is to tap an even 20. Since the trees in the area are so diverse, there has been trouble finding viable trees for tapping. Although all maple trees produce sap that can be harnessed for this process, the ideal types are red and sugar maples due to their higher sugar-to-water ratio. Furthermore, the trees have to large enough to tap. "You have to get past a 10-inch diameter to sugar them without injuring them," McCabe said.

McCabe, coordinator of the Natural Area at St. Michael's, has several of his biology classes testing the sap production of the trees and their sugar content. He is looking into the amount of viable trees in the Natural Area, and would like to tap trees there by next year.

The ideal weather for tapping the trees are temperatures below freezing at night to keep the sap fresh, and warm days between 40 and 45 degrees so the sap will run. However, with the current temperature drops we've been experiencing, the sap run this year has been almost nonexistent.

"This year is a little bit more of a typical winter where we really haven't made any syrup yet and so we're going to be in March before the season even starts,' said Chris White, sixth-generation Vermonter and founder of Mansfield Maple, a local sugaring company and producer. "This season might actually be a lot shorter. You might see a six week long season or shorter."

PHOTOS BY MATT HELLER

Sap drips out of a maple tree at the St. Michael's farm on Friday, Feb. 22. It takes about 40 gallons of sap to make one gallon of syrup.

Much larger than St. Michael's, the 10 year old company has their own sugarbush with around 30,000 trees they tap to produce about 17,000 gallons a season. The sap is harvested by the gallons and poured into evaporators to boil down into syrup at their sugar bush. The finished syrup is stored in 40 gallon containers, waiting to be shipped to the Winooski business where it's canned, bottled, infused, or turned into candy or coffee

"Maple is a really wonderful product that you can concentrate down to make single ingredient confections. You boil the syrup down and you get maple cream. Keep boiling it and you're going to end up with a maple candy consistency. Keep boiling and you can get a dry granulated sugar," White said.

Kristyn Achilich, Coordinator of the St. Michael's Farm, marks a sap bucket while Tyler Distefano '22 and Caroline Bennett '19 observe. The three were measuring sap production and tree diameter of the tapped trees.

Back on campus, students have unwittingly interfered with the process. Because some don't understand that the buckets are there for collecting sap, a few have mistakenly used the buckets on the trees as trash receptacles, contaminating the sap. The hope is that the new signs Collier's class is creating should cease the contamination.

The farm is currently equipped with a small evaporator to boil the sap down to syrup once the sap starts to run. It takes about 40 gallons of sap to create one gallon of syrup.

"This year is all about testing our capacity to do this and collecting some data to implement for later years," Achilich said. "This project is intended to reach across all kinds of different disciplines."

The end result for this year will likely end in a pancake party for those involved with the process this year. The long term goal is to create a program where students and faculty across all disciplines can come together for a few months out of the year. Volunteers will be able to help out with the process to make sure the sap doesn't burn, and create a viable product that can be sold at a decent value.

Sustainable Sugaring

by **Elizabeth Moore**
Contributing Writer

"Maple is sexy" biology professor Kristyn Achilich said. In January, the sustainability committee voted in favor of investing in a multi-year maple sugaring production. Their goal is to raise awareness about environmental concerns "of less sexy things like reducing plastics, food choice and food waste," Achilich said.

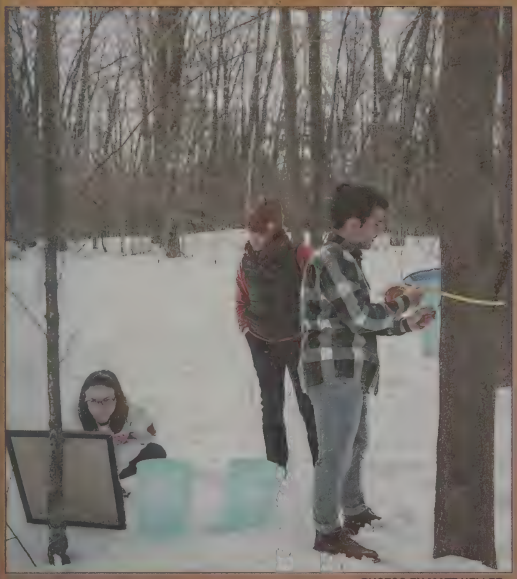
The maple syrup will be bottled in small glass jars, rather than alternative plastic options, further decreasing the carbon footprint of the program. The program is putting tree health at the top of their list by only tapping trees that are at least 10" in diameter. Each tap will remove around 7 percent of the tree's nutrients, so they plan not to over-collect.

Their hope is that the maple sugaring program will serve as a model for sustainable actions on-campus in the future.

PHOTO BY LEE KRULIKOWSKI

Maple products sit on the shelves of Mount Masfield Maple on Thursday, Feb. 28.

Maple sugaring process on-campus

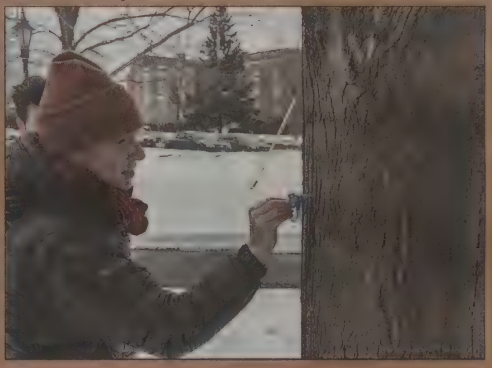


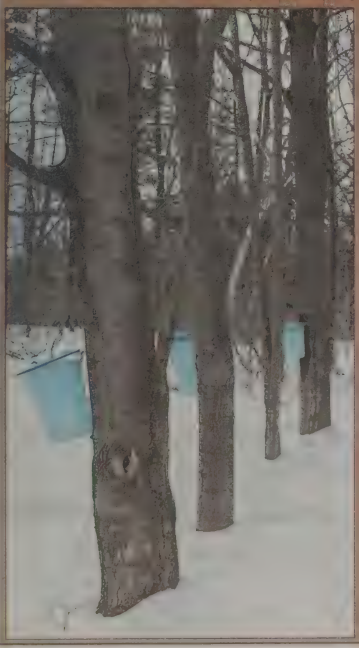
PHOTOS BY MATT HELLER

Tyler Distefano '22 measures the diameter of a maple tree as Caroline Bennett '19 records data. Kristyn Achilich, Coordinator of the St. Michael's farm, observes.

Bennett uses a drill to tap into the tree at a slightly upward angle, allowing the sap to flow out.

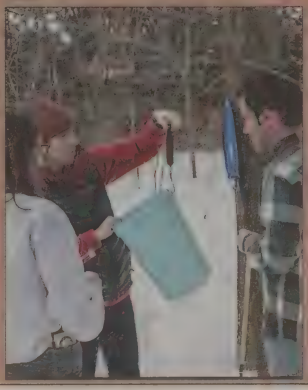
Achilich inserts the spile.



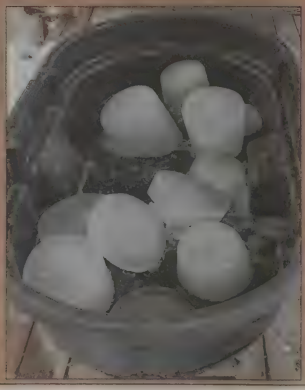


Sap buckets sit on trees at the St. Michael's farm.

Achilich measures sap production with a digital scale.



Frozen sap sits in a tub.



Kokugakuin students: one-month trip in Vermont

Kokugakuin University students go to International Commons for line dance with other current students on Friday, March 1. Part of their experience is beyond the class room.

By Sixiang Chen
Multimedia and Opinion Editor

On a day of sunshine in early February, 20 students from Kokugakuin University in Japan arrived at Burlington International Airport to start their one-month experience at St. Michael's College. The culture has shocked and delighted them.

For Rina Ishii '21, a Japanese literature major the openness of Americans left her a bit uncomfortable in the beginning. "In Alliot, when I had a meal with other Japanese friends, there were always strangers saying 'hi' to us," Ishii said. "In Japan, people don't greet the group or person they don't know."

Then there is everyday cleanliness. Ishii was shocked to see that American students always leave their shoes on inside of their homes. "I just can't stand it. In Japan, we will always leave the shoes outside of the houses, making the houses clear," Ishii said.

The students have come to improve their English, which Miyabi Inoue '22 a Business and Management major defined as the world language. "If I want an international trade job in Japan, I must improve English skills," Inoue said, adding that the speed of American students' language offered a particular challenge.

"During the discussion with American students, I totally didn't understand what they were talking about because they spoke so fast," said Inoue. "I still have a long way to go."

> **"In Japan, people normally walk on the left side. Because of it, I always collide with others."**
>
> -Yui Shimizu, a Kokugakuin University student

At the same time, Inoue said she enjoyed everything in America, including food, people, landscape, and lifestyle. "Although we have a busy schedule, we enjoy the American lifestyle, which is cozy and quiet," said Inoue. "Also, male students at St. Michael's are so gentle. Unlike male Japanese, American students love to help girls."

Makoto Saito '21, a male Japanese student whose major is global culture said he has enjoyed getting to know Americans and other international students. But it hasn't been easy adjusting to the more casual interactions. "We usually shake our hand when we say bye, but here people normally hug each other no matter they are old friends or just friends."

Not all Japanese students enjoyed their American experience. "I love America, but my first-time American experience is not wonderful," said Yui Shimizu. "In Japan, people normally walk on the left side. Because of it, I always collide with others.

"I love American people, and they are pretty open. However, as long as they are talking, they can't stop," Shimizu said with a smile.

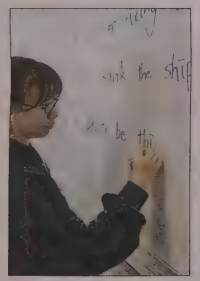
Emily Kayoi is one of the four adjunct instructors teaching the students from Kokugakuin University "Last year, there were 15 students, but this year we have 20.

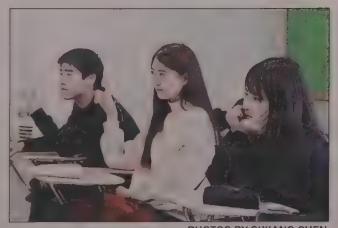
"We made a busy but fun schedule for them," said Kayoi, explaining that the students have gone to Boston and Montreal, participated in Saturday-bowling, and held a special coffee hour. "I really cherish the time spent with them."

On March 8, they will leave campus and return to Japan.

"After I go back to Japan, I will tell my friends and families what I have been through in America," Mokoto said. "Especially, I have been interviewed in English and on the school newspaper."

PHOTOS BY SIXIANG CHEN





PHOTOS BY SIXIANG CHEN

Mokoto Saito (top left), Rion Inososhi (bottom left), Yui Shimizu (top right), and other Kokugakuin students play a pronunciation game during the class on Thursday, Feb. 28. They are learning how to pronounce 'think,' 'ship,' 'sin,' and 'thin.'

PHOTOS BY SIXIANG CHEN

Kokugakuin students' group photo at the end the bowling trip on Saturday, March 2. From top left, they are Yuma Ikeuchi, Ryohei Takagi, Rina Ishii, Izumi Shiroura, Rika Ono, Rion Inososhi, and Hinako Yamashita. From bottom left, they are Sotaro Matsuo, Ryo Harada, Yuga Kuriyama, Shiho Kondo, Yuka Sano, Miyabi Inoue, and Yui Shimizu.

PHOTOS BY ZICHEN QIAN

Kokugakuin students hold a special coffee hour on Wednesday, Feb. 20. They served many Japanese foods and danced for other students and faculty during this time.

PHOTOS BY SIXIANG CHEN

Kokugakuin students go to Spare Time to play bowling and game machine on Saturday, March 2.

Spotlight on feminism with senior's classic play

Jessica Ward
Staff Writer

As the spring semester heads into its halfway point, seniors across St. Michael's College are feeling the pressure of their final thesis, project, and presentation deadlines. Molly Lovell, '19, is no exception to the sting. Her project is about bringing a 140-year-old story to life on the St. Michael's main stage with four performances of Henrik Iben's A Doll's House.

"When I was a sophomore, my professor Cathy Hurst was talking to me about what I should do for my senior thesis. She gave me an adaptation of A Doll's House to read and I really connected with the character Nora. She really speaks to me, and the show is still relevant today 140 years later now with the #MeToo movement and what it means to be a woman." Lovell said.

A Doll's House is a three-act play that premiered in Copenhagen, Denmark in 1879. It was controversial at the time for its progressive feminist attitudes as it served as a commentary on the lack of opportunities for women during that time. Being about a woman fighting for her rights against male superiority, women today are still connecting with it.

Nora is a happy, bubbly character and is often reduced to just that, however she is determined to display her intelligence and capabilities beyond just being a happy-go-lucky wife. She is keeping a massive secret, one that could destroy her own life as well as her family's – but she is doing so out of courage and the hopes of improving her own life. "She's a strong woman. I connect with her happiness and her willingness to care for others. It's admirable, and it's what I want to be." Lovell said.

Director Kathryn Markey, who is also a visiting professor from New York, has an extensive background in directing all across New England and New York, saw this play as a unique opportunity for both her and the students. "Plays like this are not produced where entertainment is the driver. It is produced where thought and political ideology is the driver. It's a play about men and women, and it's a play about asking whether it's possible to live a full and happy life when social inequality is not only the norm, but also the law."

> **"Its a play asking if its possible to live a full and happy life when when social inequality is not only the norm, but also the law."**
>
> -Kathryn Markey, director and visiting professor

PHOTO BY EMILY MAJEWSKI

Ava Magoon '22 and Molly Lovell '19 act out a scene of A Doll's House during the dress rehearsal on Wednesday

PHOTO BY EMILY MAJEWSKI

Caleb Ronan '20 and Molly Lovell '19 rehearse an intensive as the roles of husband and wife.

Professor Peter Harrigan has directed the past four main stage plays for St. Michael's College, but felt that Markey would be a better fit for this production. "We want to expose the kids to working with different people. Different directors mean experiences. [Kathryn] Markey went to St. Michael's, she has worked with the Playhouse, so she's very deeply connected to the school. She has something different to offer the students," said Harrigan.

In the past, theatre majors have opted to write their own productions for their senior thesis, but Lovell took a different, more inclusive route. "I knew I wanted my project to be a main stage performance. I really wanted it to be one that a lot of people can get involved with. I have friends doing set design, sound design, and it's so cool seeing it all come together as we do it together."

Though, St. Michael's College putting on a senior project as a main stage is one that is unique to the institution. "It's partially because the department is so small and they can, but there's more to it than that. I don't know any place where a student can do a play like this on a main stage for their senior project. The department may have gotten smaller in the last couple years, but it has opened so many opportunities for students," Markey said.

Show times for A Doll's House

Wednesday March 6th

Thursday March 7th

Friday March 8th

Saturday March 9th

Where? McCarthy Arts Center

When? 7:00pm

You don't wanna miss it!

Junior art majors showcase talent

By Brendan Tedeschi
Staff Writer

On February 27, junior art majors showcased their artwork at an exhibition in the McCarthy Art Center. The host of this event, Brian Collier who was unable to stay for the duration of the event, wanted to prepare the juniors for their senior year where they will be expected to participate in art shows on campus.

"It's a cool thing for the juniors to do because as an art major, it's mainly the seniors getting recognition for artwork and events," said Deirdre McPhee '19, a current senior who attended the exhibit. "The juniors deserve recognition and this gallery is able to do that for them as well as let them celebrate their work. The exhibition acts as an introduction to what the juniors will be expected of for next year."

McPhee worked alongside of Professor Coullier to help put together the Exhibition for the juniors. Many senior art majors attended the event to support the juniors to commemorate them for all their hard work they have been doing.

"This whole process has been a lot of work but definitely worth it," said Cameron Smith '20. "It's awesome for us to do and I'm glad we had the opportunity to showcase our art to the public." Cam's artwork was a dedication to his Grandmother who recently passed away. "A lot more planning goes into art itself than actually doing. I put in a total of about six hours to assemble my piece, but I had to plan out what I was going to make for my project, what materials to use, and where to buy them."

"I like art because I'm able to express myself through my artwork," said Sarah Donnelly '20. "My ultimate goal with art is to make a living off of it. Even if I'm not making a ton of money I would still enjoy being a full time artist." Her pieces had her own face painted onto the body of the cartoon.

Katrina Pietz '20 used her artwork to raise awareness f the damage single use plastic does to seaturtles. "Building the structure or skeleton on the inside is waht took the longest," Pietz said of the turtle sculpture shown on the right. "The reason I chose to do this was because I watched a painful video of generous people pulling a straw out of the nose of a seaturtle. I thought that making up a life sized turtle would help to raise awareness and make people think before they use plastic straws."

The McCarthy Arts Center offered a good space and welcoming atmosphere for the artists and viewers. All of the artists were pleased to be in McCarthy as they have most of their classes on North Campus. The senior exhibit will be held on Fri., March 9.

PHOTO BY BRANDON TEDESCHI

Turtle sculpture made by Katrina Pietz '20 and showcased in the junior art exhibit represents the damage single use plastic has on seaturtles.

Free speech, even when it's uncomfortable

President Trump's new proposal to ensure that free speech is protected by threatening to withdraw federal funding from colleges and universities that fail to protect free speech echoes close to home here on campus. Flyers posted around St. Michael's recently called upon the campus's "homophobic administration" to take action on an LGBTQ+ sidewalk proposed last April. As a result, the school formed a free speech committee to help process requests such as the sidewalk, flags, or any other representation that might prove controversial around campus. In an effort to ensure that all speech is protected, this also means protecting hate speech, which falls legally under free speech.

Restricting hate speech means closing the conversation to sometimes uncomfortable and differing opinions. It would confine us to a fear of speaking out against the mainstream for fear of being on the offensive. St. Michael's encourages us to live as a community. Part of being a community means a mutual level of respect for the people around you, but it also means the introduction of new ideas despite potential disagreements.In order to maintain free speech we must include all forms of speech, no matter how unpopular the opinion.

A free press must often explore contentious issues, with topics ranging from abortion and sexual assault to slogans like MAGA. A free campus must allow all of those voices to be heard as well.

Risk of losing free speech means risk of losing our power of expression. On a campus of higher education, where we're supposed to be exploring our opinions and contributing to a conversation that extends far beyond our campus, that would be a very dangerous precedent indee

MEG FRIEL
NEWS EDITOR

Email kmartin4@mail.smcvt.edu for information on the contribution process.

Mission Statement

We, the voice of St. Michael's College, strive to create high quality journalism collected on a foundation of integrity. We represent the pulse of our campus by facilitating a forum for informative, enlightening and thought-provoking conversation. Through in-depth reporting, accurate storytelling and exceptional visuals, The Defender aims to professionally and ethically deliver the truth to our diverse audience.

Concussions in the classroom: professor vs. student

By Lorelei Poch
Staff Writer

When sophomore, Megan Doherty, suffered her fifth concussion this fall due to an open ice hit during a game against SUNY Potsdam, the ice hockey forward had to retire from collegiate hockey. That was tough. Then, after missing a week of classes when she went home to recover, she wondered about how her professors would react. In the beginning they were sympathetic, but as the weeks went on things changed.

Doherty said she felt lucky that her professors seemed to understand when she first returned to school. She struggled to focus in class and take notes, but her attendance alone seemed to matter to professors. It was later in the semester when things became more difficult.

> **"Are you even seeing a doctor?"**
> - A professor asked a student

From the beginning of this school year to now, 56 students have formally filed concussions with the office of the dean, who then alerts faculty. Jonathan D'Amore, Saint Michael's College Associate Dean, works to communicate individual students' needs to professors for both short term and long-term circumstances. He said one of the most important aspects of his job is to help individual instructors working with students understand concussions and how they affect students individually and invisibly.

D'Amore emphasized the importance of trainings in recent years for faculty lead by the Brain Injury Association of Vermont which provided general information, He also meets with students to determine what their short and long-term limitations will be and then communicates that to faculty members.

Students must have the right discussions with their professors to get the specific help they need for their individual symptoms, which can vary greatly depending on the severity needs of the concussion, how many they have had, and how well they manage their symptoms.

Lack of communication between departments leave faculty without enough information to properly accommodate the student's needs, D'Amore said.. A discrepancy of expectations can cloud decision making around what works best for the student's well-being and how to maintain a high level of education and learning for both the classroom and the individual.

Holes in communication are frustrating to students like Doherty and others with traumatic brain injuries who must defend their personal limitations, with professors who might not be willing to revise their work load. Doherty spoke out about her classroom struggles claiming that she would get this "very overwhelming pressure to just keep up when taking notes in class." Doherty would remove herself from attending classes later in a day due to the overpowering feeling of fatigue and defeat from her concussion.

Doherty appreciated the help she had from the athletic trainers, who sent out the initial email telling her professors she was concussed. This made the conversations with her professors easy because they already knew about it.

Since concussions are not a physical injury, professors cannot see progress made unlike a broken arm, so when Doherty neared the end of this fall semester she said her professors expected her to be healed. "It felt like my professors thought I was taking advantage of the fact they were extending my assignments, they almost seemed like they did not trust me that I was still injured." One professor asked, "Are you even seeing a doctor?"

> **"Should you even be here? ... Like for your education, should you really be here?"**
> - A professor asked a student

Jordan Monbouquette, a junior on the ice hockey team, suffered the symptoms from a traumatic brain injury for 11 months, struggling with dizziness, blurred vision, and memory problems which faded out to light and noise sensitivity and headaches. Monbouquette found herself needing academic accommodations, such as extensions on assignments, for the spring and fall semesters of 2017. Her professors generally understood her situation except for one. When Monbouquette turned in an assignment late, he responded with, "That was two months ago."

Monbouquette said she was lucky to have the support network she did through the athletics department and somewhat through academics, adding they allowed her to drop a class in the last week of school. But she said the college lacks a mental support program, and someone she "could just talk to" about her journey to recovery. Monbouquette would also like faculty to be properly educated about concussions each school year to ensure students can feel confident that their needs will be taken care of professionally.

Ashley Johnson attended Saint Michael's College for just two months before she was in car accident and suffered a mild traumatic brain injury, otherwise recognized as "a really bad concussion." Most of Johnson's professors were accommodating, she said, but one was particularly unhelpful. When Johnson explained her doctor's accommodations (she was to attend as many classes as she was capable of and prescribed school as a vital component of her recovery) the faculty member responded with, "Should you really be here?" to which Johnson was shocked.

Johnson's story got worse. One professor blurted out questions in front of her whole class about her conditions. Johnson said Tony Messuri and the staff at the Academic Enrichment Commons "fought for her" and accommodated her needs, but she ultimately decided to transfer to Norwich University. In retrospect, Johnson said, she wished the Academic and Health Services departments would communicate better so non-athletes, who lack immediate support from Athletics, don't end up transferring when their needs are not recognized.

Doherty said she and others are ready to form a student coalition of long-term injured athletes to support concussed students and provide a structured backbone of trust to aid students when they feel down about their condition.

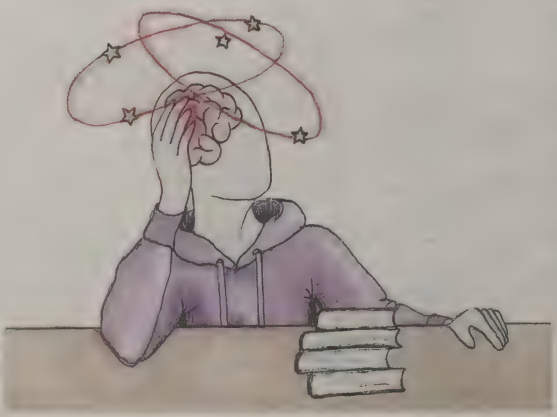


ILLUSTRATION BY KATRINA PIETZ

The buzz on caffeine; helping or hurting you?

By Lily Bonadies
Multimedia Editor

To get going every morning, Jess Debs '22, drinks a medium Dunkin' Donuts iced tea. "On a bad day, I'll have two cups. It energizes me and keeps me focused."

Busy college students often look for a boost – to study, get through practice or make it to that late-night party. But is that morning (or afternoon) caffeine jolt helping you or hurting you?

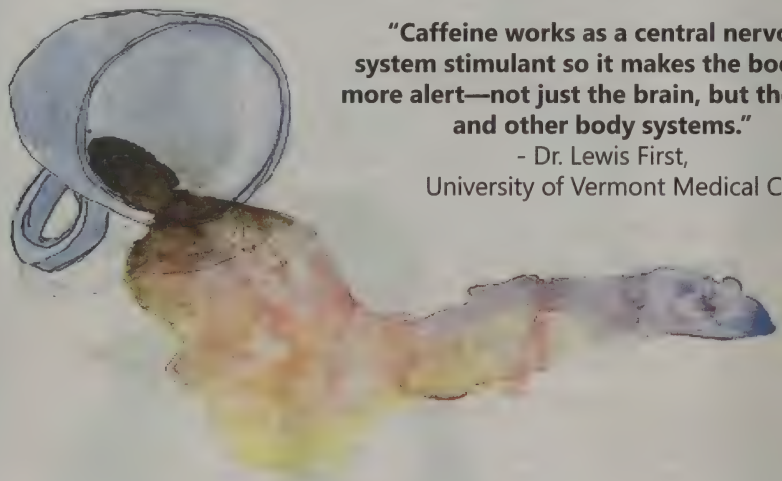
According to the Mayo Clinic, drinking caffeine in moderation – up to 400 milligrams a day – is safe for most adults. That's equal to about four cups of coffee, 10 cans of soda or two energy shot drinks.

Caffeine is a stimulant that can keep you awake and focused, but it can also have some negative side effects, said Lewis First, a pediatrician at the University of Vermont Medical Center. "It can increase heart rate, blood pressure and even result in hallucinations and seizures," he said, adding that irritability, anxiety, headaches and sleep problems can also be problems. In the long term, he added,

Drinking too much caffeine "can also cause the body to lose calcium, contributing to bone loss over time, and can increase the potential for dental cavities and weight gain."

A survey of 57 of St. Michael's students showed that most of them do not rely on caffeine to power their day. In fact, less than half -- about 40% -- said they drink caffeine daily. (About 59% said they don't rely on caffeine at all.)

With midterms right around the corner, you're probably not getting much sleep and are tyring to stay focused. Caffeine can be useful for giving you a little boost with your day-to-day crazy lifestyle, but remember to drink it in moderation. That way, your caffeine buzz won't turn into caffeine overload.



"Caffeine works as a central nervous system stimulant so it makes the body act more alert—not just the brain, but the heart and other body systems."
- Dr. Lewis First,
University of Vermont Medical Center

ILLUSTRATION BY EMILY JOYCE

Caffiene wars: weighing the buzz in popular drinks

Dunkin' Donuts (brewed coffee)
Small (10 oz.) 150 mg
Medium (14 oz.) 210 mg
Large (20 oz.) 300 mg
Extra Large (24 oz.) 359 mg

Starbucks (brewed coffee)
Short (8 oz.) 155 mg
Tall (12 oz.) 235 mg
Grande (16 oz.) 310 mg
Venti (20 oz.) 410 mg

Various Energy Drinks
Monster(16.91 oz.) 160 mg
Red Bull (8.46 oz.) 80 mg
5-hour energy (2 oz.) 200 mg

Source: https://www.caffeineinformer.com/

How are you really doing?

Active minds changes its approach to the mental health conversation

by **Elizabeth Hogan**
Staff Writter

On a recent Wednesday afternoon, Alliot came alive as students pasted messages of self-worth onto mirrors, planted flowers, and carefully poured liquid out of alcohol bottles, attempting to create the perfect shot. As hundreds of students filtered in and out, they were greeted by tables full of students, faculty, and community members, asking them to participate in activities centered around their mental health.

This was Fresh Check Day, a yearly event set up by the Saint Michael's College chapter of Active Minds to raise mental health awareness and decrease the stigma around the topic. Active Minds is a national nonprofit organization dedicated to reducing the stigma around mental health, especially on college campuses where mental illness is a major problem and suicide is the second leading cause of death among students. Also, 39 percent of students in college experience a significant mental health issue, such as depression.

The Saint Michael's College chapter of Active Minds is moving away from their usual model for the club, which was a meeting every two weeks, to more event-based work like Fresh Check Day. They hope that this new approach will bring further awareness to their message and allow more people to use the resources that they offer. This shift in programming for the chapter came after co-president's Maddy Moore '19 and Hannah Mishrinky '19 went to the Active Minds National Conference, a two day event in Washington D.C., where the various Active Minds chapters met to discuss mental health issues in college.

"While we were there we realized we wanted to revamp the club because we had seen attendance start to go down. So we wanted to collaborate with various areas of campus and try to pull in people from different groups," said Moore.

This was true for Sophomore Hannah Wilmot '21, who went to Fresh Check Day without previously knowing much about Active Minds. Wilmot focused carefully as she poured the perfect measurement for a shot of vodka at the "know your limit" table.

"I would definitely check out a meeting after coming to this event. It brought up a lot of important insights about mental health, which I think is sometimes lacking on campus," Wilmott said.

"Before we were doing bi-weekly meetings, so we were engaging a smaller number of students consistently so the changes this year are focused on doing larger events that engage more people across campus" said Assistant Dean of Students Catherine Welch, who acts as the advisor to Active Minds.

"The leadership team is trying to see how Saint Michael's students want to have the conversation and how to have the conversation with the most amount of students. Less of having to go to a meeting once a month, but more of what are the creative ways can we interact with them," Welch said.

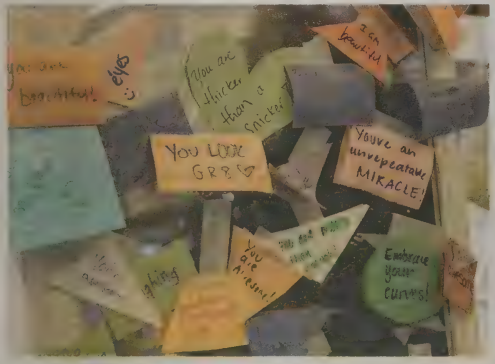
Activities include putting information in the "Stall Street Journal", and doing more tabling where they just plant a seed as people pass by in Alliot, Welch said. "They'also ran the "How Are You Really?" event last November and that drew a couple of hundred students, and was like a coffee hour event."

"I'm really excited about the events we have coming up and the turnout for the events, just knowing that people feel safe in this environment," said Emily LaCroix '21, who was working at one of the tables for Fresh Check Day, where students were given a plant that they were told to water daily in order to remind them to take care of themselves.

"Our overall motivation and goal behind everything is to eliminate the stigma around mental health," Moore said. "You want to be able to come forward because it is not something you should have to keep to yourself. There is this stigma around getting the help that you need which prevents people from taking action. We want to give people a comfortable environment because we do have these resources to help."

PHOTOS BY ELIZABETH HOGAN

Isabella Pilkey and Hannah Mishriky table at Fresh Check Day on Wednesday, Feb. 27.



Encouraging messages are taped to a mirror on Fresh Check Day.

Kathy Butts and Ryan Stanton talk to students in the Alliot lobby on Fresh Check Day.

Measles outbreak across the U.S: A growing concern

By Meg Friel
News Editor

As a growing number of measles cases breaks out in western states, the debate about whether to vaccinate has come under scrutiny again. Here on campus, there are currently 14 students missing some or all vaccinations.

Anti-vaccinators, a group of people rallying against vaccinations, have come out of the woodworks in recent years under Facebook group names such as "Moms Against Vaccination."

"Anti-vaxxers," as they're often referred to, commonly use alternatives such as essential oils or vitamins as substitutes for vaccinations. Medical professionals are concerned about the rising rate of measles as a result.

"We've been able to almost eradicate many diseases worldwide, many which were life changing and or life threatening, so I think that being vaccinated is a safe and healthy thing for people to do," said Mary Masson, director of Bergeron Wellness Center. "What you're seeing in these cases is children that are getting very ill and sometimes dying from the measles again, where we had the means to protect those children with a proper vaccination."

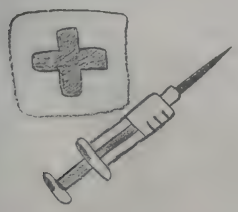


ILLUSTRATION BY KELLY CULLEN

Bergeron can write prescriptions for any vaccines.

The anti vaccination movement stems from British study published in 1995 claiming a link between the measles-mumps-rubella vaccine (MMR) and autism. Although subsequent studies have scientifically debunked the premise time and time again, this link resonates with anti-vaccinators. Another study, published Monday in the Annals of Internal Medicine, shows no association between the MMR vaccine and autism.

"The vaccine related to autism theory has got to be the one study that was then debunked that has always stuck with people," Masson said. "It was one study by a British physician. It was not only a fraudulent study and totally debunked, he then lost his medical license. And yet, people today still believe his study that is linked to autism. So, there is no scientific evidence that any vaccines are linked to autism."

With this trend on the rise, more and more young children have parents choosing not to vaccinate them. This leaves other children at risk for possible diseases, as well as the teachers and supervisors around them.

"I grew up in a family with immune-system-compromised members, so to me, they're important," said a 2018 St. Michael's Alumni, now working as a schoolteacher. "I'm there to teach them, whether they're vaccinated or not. If I did have a student who was unvaccinated, I would definitely make sure to deep clean my room everyday, and especially when the flu or stomach bug is going around."

Falling vaccination rates can directly cause harm to children and adults who are unable to get vaccinated, said the U.S. National Library of Medicine on their website. The anti-vaccination movement has made headlines recently due to the re-emergence of diseases such as measles, which were once almost eradicated. The Center for Diseases Control [CDC] reports 159 measles cases in 10 states. Common symptoms of measles are ear infections or diarrhea, and in some cases, hearing loss or death due to pneumonia caused by measles..

"The easy problem to look at is that people aren't vaccinating their kids, so here comes a bunch of medieval diseases we haven't had for a long time because we've had vaccines," said Daniel Mallory '21, a biochemistry and math major. "Measles is easily one of the most infectious diseases, and it didn't exist anymore for a reason."

Certain vaccinations are required by the Vermont Department of Health in order to attend schooling of all ages, including college. These vaccinations include the Measles, Mumps, Rubella vaccine [MMR], chickenpox, tetanus, and hepatitis B. However, students are able to sign a medical exemption, or an exemption claiming religious beliefs, and still attend St. Michael's.

"If they do sign an exemption saying they have a religious reason why they don't want to get vaccinated, or a medical reason, then they can do that, and still be a student here, but we keep track of who they are," Masson said. "If there is an outbreak of any one of those things that they're not properly vaccinated for, they are notified immediately and given the chance to get vaccinated and or leave campus for their safety, so they're not exposed to it."

Cases of the measles and the mumps have been coming up across the map, occurring mostly in the Northwest and New York State. St. Michael's experienced its own cases of the mumps last year, with three students affected by the disease - all three having not only their MMR vaccination, but also a booster shot against MMR as well.

"The booster gives your immune system that boost to react to it, and then supposedly you have lifelong immunity," said Masson. "What we're finding with the mumps is there's a certain small percentage of the population that immunity waned. So, even though those students were vaccinated, they lost a little bit of their immunity. They did not get as serious a case of the mumps, but they still got the mumps." The CDC is now looking at the possibility of a third booster shot, Masson said.

ILLUSTRATION BY KELLY CULLEN

Measles symptoms typically include a red, blotchy rash, headaches, runny nose, sore throat, and a fever.

Looking for a shot?

The Bergeron Wellness Center can write prescriptions for any vaccines that are necessary, or if anyone wants one, and the student can get it at a local pharmacy. Most local pharmacies now give vaccines right there with a prescription. When people travel to other countries, they may need additional or supplemental vaccines, like syphoid, hepatitis A, yellow fever.

'Share indefinitely' or not at all

By Katherine Martin
Executive Editor

Sarah caught her boyfriend in bed with a good friend when their location showed them together. Emma's parents thought she was kidnapped when her phone was on the side of the highway. Anne went days without calling her friends because she could see where they were.

Location tracking apps have been wreaking havoc across campuses.

"Snap Maps" allows you to see where people were the last time they opened the location-tracking app, if they choose to disclose their location. Find My Friends, the more accurate GPS system, allows you to track those who share their location with you at any time of the day.

The apps offer a way to check on friends and find the most crowded party, but many students also consider them "creepy" and "intrusive". According to a recent Defender survey of 70 students, those who actively use the apps check them on average 5-10 times a day. While many college students like the apps "for safety reasons," their usage has grown well beyond checking in on drunk friends.

"I know how often people use it to see where their friends are and I don't like how people can see every detail of where I am," said a recent alumni.

Increases Safety

"You can see where your friends are if you are concerned for their safety," said Annie Good '22. Many students agreed that they like Find My Friends for safety reasons like locating drunk friends on a night out.

"I dropped my phone out of an uber on the side of the highway coming home from downtown," said Emma Coleman '21. "My mom had tracked me that night and saw that I was on the highway. She thought I was just going home, but the next morning she tracked me again and saw that my phone was at the same spot as the night before. My mom was very worried and thought I had been kidnapped. She called public safety. I used to hate how they had my location and used to turn my location off, but after this incident I keep it on at all times just to be safe."

According to the survey, 33 percent of users have their parents on the app.

"I have both my parents on Find My Friends," said Alex Vincent '19. "I recently turned it off because I didn't like the feeling of being watched. My Dad's argument for making me keep it on was that he liked the idea of being able to check in on me if I was traveling back and forth from school. As long as it's not used to stalk people than it is fine but the minute it feels like people are keeping tabs on me I don't like it."

While there are times that the app has been useful in crises, it is used much more largely for curiosity reasons. "In terms of use, my mind would go to emergency situations but I think those are few and far between what it is actually used for," said Catherine Welch, assistant dean of students.

Impacts relationships

"My ex-boyfriend and I were on a break and I checked Snap Maps late at night and saw that my good friend slept over his apartment the first weekend we decided to go on a break," said Sarah, a senior at UVM. "I found out later she slept in his bed. I wouldn't have known or asked about it if I didn't check snap maps. My friend quickly turned her location off after the fight."

According to the survey, 25% of students in relationships track their significant other's location. Five students said they have caught someone cheating on them through Find My Friends and three answered that they have been caught themselves.

"I got caught dating my friend's ex-boyfriend," said Olivia '21*. "We were keeping it on the down low but they she tracked our location and found us together."

Parents and significant others are not the only dots on the Find My Friends map. Forty percent of users have over 15 people on Find My Friends, proving it to be used most commonly among friends.

"Before this app I would call my friends first thing out of a three hour class to ask where they are to hangout and now I just go "find" them," said Anne '19. "Vice versa, I am busy and work a lot. If my friend found my location and sees I am at work they probably won't ask me to hang out. It takes away from expressing how much you would like to hang out with someone and how often you think about them."

"Maybe they're in the library and they were having a really bad day, you could hear in their voice they were about to cry and you'd be like 'I'll be right there,'" Welch said. "But now it's like well I won't even call because I know they're in the library or at the gym and I'll just talk to them later."

A preview of what the app, Find My Friends, looks like on campus.

Elevates social anxiety

Looking at someone's GPS coordinates doesn't tell the full story of why they are in that specific place. Speculation or false assumptions can be drawn from checking someone's location.

"When I was with my ex, I found myself checking his location, especially when I thought a friend of his was more than a friend," said Jane Harris* '20. "He was being honest though so it made me look bad."

On the other hand, they can tell you when your friends are together without you, regardless of what they are doing. "Sometimes I will see my friends hanging out without me and that sucks," Harris said.

Several students acknowledged that location apps either create or increase FOMO (fear of missing out).

"Young adults are learning socially who they want to be and how they want to engage and I think it's natural that people would feel left out," Welch said. "Technology increases that likelihood because you are constantly aware of what everyone else is doing or their best lives that they put on social media."

Decreases independence

Even solo runs or trips to the store become known to everyone you share your location with. Turning your location off is an option however, 58% of users responded that they believe their friends would find them suspicious if they turned their location off. In addition, 48% of users said they would find their friends suspicious if they did the same.

In this case, privacy jeopardizes social status. "I don't like that if I want to be alone or do things without others it look suspicious," said Alyssa '20.

"Even when you're at the gym listening to music and you think you're unplugged, you're not unplugged because friends on the app could find you at all times," Welch said. "That would be startling to me. You're always on."

Names changed for anonymity

> **"I got caught dating my friend's ex-boyfriend."**
>
> -An annonymous sophomore.

Got tingles? : new sensory trend taking Youtube by storm

By Leanne Hamilton
Arts & Culture Editor

PHOTO BY LEANNE HAMILTON

Scratching a microphone, soft whispers, tapping, and brushing are a few triggers above that cause the tingling sensation of ASMR.

Waking up in a cold sweat, I can feel my heart thumping beneath my chest as my breathing becomes rapid. The stress of the day has reached capacity and threatens full panic if I don't calm my mind soon; a mind that's running a mile a minute with the looming fear of the panic that quietly awaits to take over. I quickly grab my phone from beneath my pillow and find Youtube.

Typing in the soft sounds of raindrops I let the gentle pitter patter fill my ears, my mind focusing on nothing more than each drop of rain that falls. My breathing becomes steady again. My heart no longer tries to break free from my chest, but beats at its own pace. Relaxation and calm wash over me as the tingling sensation runs from the top of my head and down my spine.Just like that, I am sleeping once again and another panic attack has been avoided.

That tingling sensation that millions of people experience when exposed to certain repetitive, gentle and non-threatening triggers is a a real phenomena known as ASMR or Autonomous Sensory Meridian Response. You may have experienced it yourself as a kid when someone played with your hair or spelled words on your back and you had to guess what the words were. Maybe you noticed it when listening or watching someone turn the pages of a magazine or a book, or when you watch Bob Ross paint with slow hand movements and speaking softly.

Still a newly defined phenomena, ASMR has only started to trend within the last couple of years. Videos by "ASMR" artists eating noodles, whispering, and tapping on glass have proliferated, and people are using ASMR to reduce anxiety, depression, and insomnia. "Take any random food or song and you will probably find that 20 percent of people LOVE it, 20 percent of people HATE it, and the rest are in the middle," Craig Richard, a professor of biopharmaceutical science at Shenandoah university and author of "Brain Tingles" said in an email. "This is the same for sounds like whispering, tapping, and mouth sounds; 20 percent get ASMR, 20 percent get misophonia, and the rest are in the middle." Lexie Lembo '21, finds herself somewhere in the middle when it comes to ASMR. It's not something she looks for when trying to relax but she can understand the calming aspect it may have for some people. "I will watch videos like Bob Ross to relax but watching videos on Youtube specifically made for ASMR I don't watch," Lembo said.

> **"It started to rapidly grow into a curiosity and then something helpful for relaxation and sleep."**
>
> -Dr. Craig Richard, professor of biopharmaceutical science and author of "Brain Tingles"

Why the sudden rise in popularity with millions of people watching these videos on Youtube? It's become so popular that there was an ASMR commercial during the superbowl sponsored by Michelob Ultra. Richard has done research on the growing phenomena and says that it really comes down to the good feeling these sensory experiences provide. "ASMR is a good and somewhat subtle feeling," Richard said. "It took until the internet came along to bring together the few people looking to chat about it on a website forum in 2007 where from there, it started to rapidly grow into a curiosity and then something helpful for relaxation and sleep," Richard said.

On his website, Richard has a survey of over 25,000+ people those who experience ASMR.

While many enjoy the effects of ASMR, there are many that have the exact opposite response known as misophonia. While triggers such as mouth chewing or lip smacking relax people who respond to ASMR, the same sounds can cause agitation in people with misophonia. Lucy Chin '21, "I don't like mouth sounds or the eating videos, but I do like the sound of tires on a dirt road or calligraphy writing videos. I don't get tingles, those just relax me so I can't really say its ASMR."

This type of response to both ASMR or misophonia, just seems to be human nature. Dr. Richards goes on to point out that "Preferences to food and music have been shown to be influenced by a mix of genetics, exposure, culture, and expectations-- so ASMR triggers will probably be the same."

According to an article recommended by Dr. David Boynton, chair of the psychology department at St. Michael's College, specific regions in your brain work together when your brain is idling/lacking stimuli. These regions are known as the DMN, or default mode network. A few hypotheses suggest these regions work separately when using ASMR. "We can look at it as a difference in processing that not everyone has. As the article states it is nothing pathological, just brains functioning differently." Boynton said.

Lexie Lembo doesn't experience the tingly aspect of it. For her, it's more just about relaxing while watching someone write or paint; something Lembo enjoys doing herself. "I can understand why people like it, but many of the triggers don't relax me. I don't like someone whispering my ear in the first place."

For someone that doesn't experience the tingles that ASMR can have, it makes it harder to understand the true feeling of relaxation from it. Without the tingles it just seems strange. However, for someone like me that is part of the 20 percent that gets ASMR, I can overlook the oddity and see a full night of sleep.

A couple videos if you're interested in exploring ASMR

The Adventures of Alice in Wonderland by Maria "Gentle Whispering ASMR"

Soft Singing Covers- Billie Eillish Edition by Lauren "Frivolous Fox ASMR"

Reading by Candlelight by Emma "Whispersred ASMR"

ASMR for People Who Don't Get Tingles by "Caroline ASMR"

'It's not working out'

How to tell someone you don't want to live with them

By Luke Tancredi
Staff Writer

The housing process is lengthy and time consuming, involving everything from determining where you live next year, to whom you live with. And perhaps one of the most difficult elements is breaking those roommate ties. When the clutter becomes too much, or the roommate you once loved turns into your worst nightmare, how do you tell someone you won't be living with them next year?

In some cases, the conversation results in resentment towards a former roommate. Maria Kanner '21* had a difficult time with her roommate freshman year.

"It was extremely uncomfortable," she said."I didn't know when to come back to my room because I never knew who or what was transpiring in our room. I used to hang out in my friends dorm rooms as much as possible, and once or twice I even slept there too."

After reaching out to Student Life, Kanner ultimately decided to avoid face-to-face confrontation, and instead texted her roommate after her frustration built.

"Later on in the week, I came back to our room and found that my personal items were trashed, broken or misplaced," Kanner said. "I got extremely upset and then talked to my RA and she helped me get into contact with Student Life. Once I talked to my RA and Student Life, the process was moving fast. I am a wimp when it comes to confrontation. I ended up texting my former roommate to let her know I will be moving out. In the text I kept it short and not so sweet and told her I will be moving my items out as soon as possible."

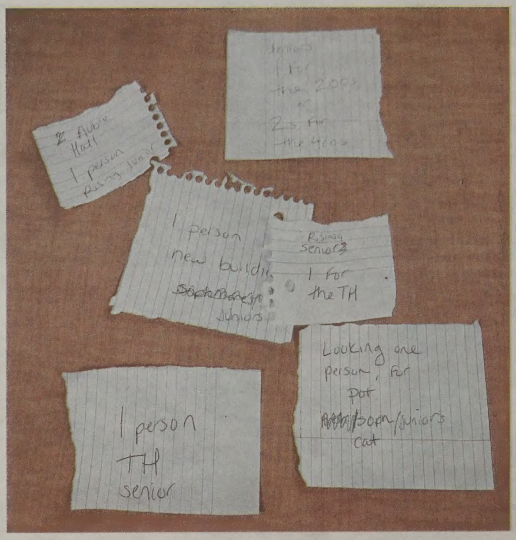


PHOTO BY LENA O'DONNELL

At the housing mixer, students are asked to write down what year they would like their roommate to be, as well as which housing option they are looking to opt-into.

Student Conduct and assistant dean of students. "Have a discussion in person. No one wants to get an email saying they don't want to live with you next year, and then you still have to live with that person."

Many St. Michael's students share a similar story, including Kyra Smith*, who quickly realized she had to move away from her roommate.

> **"I ended up texting my former roommate to let her know I was moving out. In the text I kept it short and not so sweet."**
>
> -Maria Kanner, '21

Some students having trouble with their roommate, or wishing to move out, use the Student Life Office to figure out how to break the news.

"What we suggest to students all the time if they're unsure, is to go either to their RA or RD, or an upper class student they might know that already went through something like that and walk through the process, and walk through what that conversation might look like," said Jeff Vincent, coordinator of Community Standards and

"There was an incident where I borrowed something, and she freaked out," said Smith. "She was so messy. Her side of the room would start inching towards mine and then my friends said 'You're not happy there,' and they kind of just convinced me to move out."

Former roommates Cameron Maher, '21, and Matthew Riordan, '21 had the "I don't want to live with you" conversation this year. But, the two remain amicable.

"We kind of just saw it coming," said Riordan. "We didn't have any problems, we each wanted bigger spaces, and he found out there was an open spot in one of the suites, so we eventually talked about it and agreed on it."

Having discussed the idea of moving out beforehand, Maher said that his roommate was on board with the idea as well.

"It varies for some people depending on the situation," Maher said. "Whether you have big conflict, space, going to bed or how you want to keep the room, but for me and him it really wasn't awkward. We're still good friends to this day, we just both wanted our own living spaces."

Talking to your roommate about moving out can be tricky, and Smith holds some regrets as to what she should have done differently in the process.

"I would have moved out earlier," Smith said. "Get out as soon as you can, and don't pretend that everything's okay. Just avoid the awkwardness and get it done. You should talk it out. I didn't do that, I think it would have been better if we just talked about it, and talked about how unhappy I was."

Kanner offered some advice as to what she would have done differently, and what she believes would have saved herself the stress and awkwardness of the last-minute conversation.

"I would have talked to her in person about what happened to my personal items first," Kanner said. "Depending on how that conversation went, I would have told her in person about how serious I was about moving out of the room."

Maher said he believes that the best way to confront your roommate is to simply be honest and upfront, and the most important thing to keep in mind is that communication is key.

PHOTO BY LENA O'DONNELL

(Left to right): John Humes '20, Liam Maltby '21, and Sean Costello '21 share a laugh over pizza at the housing mixer hosted in Einsteins on Wednesday, Feb. 20.

"If you're planning on not living with your current roommate, communicate well, don't just move out of the room," Maher said. "Matt and I were so good in our situation because we communicated well with each other, and we were honest at the same time."

*Name changed for anonymity

Patching up last night's mistakes

by James Koppelmann
Opinion editor

It's a gloomy Sunday morning on Saint Michael's campus. As the roomates of a typical townhouse on campus wake up and shake off their hangover, they soon realize the amount of damages their house has received from the night before. Dozens of fist sized holes have been blasted through the ceiling. Paint has been chipped and stained around the living room. This is a common problem among students who live on campus. According to Jim Farrington, (associate director of architectural and design services), the school accumulates $5,000-10,000 a year in damage to doors alone. This does not account for damages to the walls or ceilings.

In fear of putting in a work order that would likely result in a hefty fine for each of them, many townhouse residents start fixing the damages to the best of their ability on their own, heading down to Lowe's to pick up sheetrock tape and paint. In fact, the scenario is so common that Lowe's carries white and beige paint colors called "SMC Townhouse."

Living in a townhouse allows students to learn how to cook their own meals, and begin living an adult life. But beside the normal wear and tear that a townhouse will go through, there is a lot of damage that occurs intentionally. It is a common trend for students to punch holes in the ceilings and kick holes in the drywall during a night of partying.Once a townhouse experiences damage of any kind, school protocol is to put in a work order to have it fixed. Lately many students would much rather attempt to fix this damage on their own.Broken windows, busted doors, electrical issues and plumbing problems are all examples of damages that will more than likely require a work order. Busted holes in the walls, ceilings are far more common types of damage in townhouses. "you could be a very handy person when it comes to fixing these damages but do-it-yourself fixes will be noticed and you will still be charged for the damages," Farrington said.

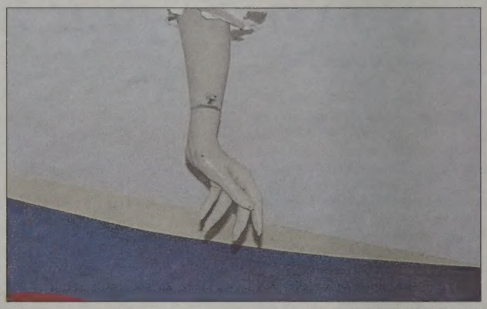


PHOTO BY JAMES KOPPELMANN

Townhouse ceiling damage is temporarily beautified with a mannequin arm.

"My house has experienced plenty of damage this year. We have had a two broken windows, complications with the heat, and issues with the cheap townhouse doors," said Isaac Rumpf '20. "For these damages we have had work orders put in and the school has taken care of it. But as for the many fist hole sized holes in the ceiling, I would rather fix these on my own. I think it is silly that the school expects us to report these types of damages.The school should push for students to clean up after their own mistakes. Holes in the drywall and ceiling are not hard to fix at all and will cost around $30 to gather the supplies you would need," Rumpf said.

Lowes hardware in Essex, Vt. has realized there is a demographic of customers from Saint Michaels who are often looking to fix up their townhouse. There is even a specific paint type called "SMC Townhouse." For $30 one can get a gallon of the same paint that is used in campus townhouses.

Many students have taken up the do-it-yourself approach. "We go to a school full of future engineers, businesses workers, doctors, etcetera," said Nolan Cary '20. "Who is to say that we are not capable of fixing a simple hole in the wall?"

"We are mostly concerned about these things because these townhouses have been here for a long time and will hopefully be here in the future," said Lou DiMasi, director of residence life and assistant dean of students. "Students must put in work orders to make sure these damages are fixed properly. We can not allow for damages to be fixed in a less than adequate manner," DiMasi said.

At the end of the academic year there will be an evaluation of the townhouses and any damages will be held financially responsible to the students. Damages that are left in the house, along with botched fix jobs, will result in a fine to the residents.

Barred owl seen near Dion

PHOTO BY MATT HELLER

A Barred Owl sits patiently hunting for rodents on a flagpole near the Dion Family Student Center on Friday, Mar. 1.

Registration woes: 'The whole semester you hear your friends complaining.'

By Emily Majewski
Staff Writer

For Elizabeth Hogan '21, the morning of spring course registration in November was every student's nightmare. Weeks prior to registration Hogan was conscientious, making sure to meet with her advisor, look through the course catalog on KnightVision, and make a backup plan of classes. But, when she woke up early on her assigned day, she realized that her advisor had not given her online clearance to register.

"I was so stressed out and anxious," said Hogan looking back. Ultimately she was able to join the classes she was originally vying for, but not everyone fares so well.

Eric Hou '19 said he has witnessed too many friends' frustrations because they are not prepared for registration. "They will end up going to a class they don't really want to go to, but they have to, so the whole semester you hear your friends complaining," he said.

Upperclassmen often have established a plan to get the best results from a process perceived to be heavily weighed against students. Elena Lloyd '19 suggests "the sticky note plan," which is a tactic used by education majors and their advisors to prepare for the registration process.

Even after changing her major, she chose to keep up with mapping required classes with sticky notes semester by semester. "Right before registering I would go through and make a list of what classes would fit under the requirement and then when it came time to actually do it I'd just take whatever was the best one that was still open," Lloyd said.

ILLUSTRATION BY KATRINA PIETZ

"Don't be afraid of the things that are out of your comfort zone."

-David Barrowclough, registrar

Interestingly enough, one of Lloyd's favorite classes over her four years on campus was her science requirement. Science has nothing to do with her English major, yet it left a lasting impression on Lloyd: what should a student do if tempted to try something completely new? "Your 128 credits you need for graduation gives you so much room to just take something wild," said David Barrowclough, Registrar. "Don't be afraid of the things that are out of your comfort zone because we have some really cool people in the classroom that you might not otherwise expose yourself to or topics that you might not otherwise get."

Barrowclough is an alumnus from the class of 2002 chose a liberal arts college for the exact purpose of trying an array of new things. This concept is especially alluring to undergraduates who may be undecided yet willing to reach out beyond their comfort zone. If Barrowclough hadn't, he may not have declared a journalism minor when journalism wasn't quite on his radar. Hou recommends waiting to take required LSC's until you are ready to truly absorb them. His favorite classes quickly became philosophy - "They really let you think about 'what's the meaning of myself?' You start to think about things that you'd probably never think about if you didn't take the class" he said.

using the add or drop period to your advantage. This has been recently extended, giving students the opportunity to change their schedule right up until returning to campus in the fall. With classes marked full, be sure to check for available petition seats before assuming it is impossible.

"Our faculty is so agreeable for the most part that even if a student is closed out, they just show up and ask [the professor]," Barrowclough said. Keep in mind that although the process can be incredibly nerve-wracking, there is staff in the Registrar's Office as well as the classroom.

"I'm not going to be naïve and think that registration is perfect and everyone always gets what they want," Barrowclough said, "But I think students get most of what they want most of the time". Eliminate as many possible stressors that are within your control ahead of time and be sure to remind your advisor to give you clearance to register.

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